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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
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10/757,814

01/15/2004

Brent Alan Deroo

33716-1

5407

7590

04/11/2005

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EXAMINER

ALIMENTI, SUSAN C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3644

DATE MAILED: 04/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/757,814 | Applicant(s) DEROO ET AL. | |
| | Examiner Susan C. Alimenti | Art Unit 3644 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for providing the percentage ratios of some components of the animal litter, does not reasonably provide enablement for the entire mixture since it is unclear if any other substances, i.e. binding agents, clays, etc., are added to the mixture to make the final product. It is not positively stated that there are not other additives included to the final palletized material. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. Further, there is no positive statement of the criticality of said desired proportions or how such a specific combination is novel over the prior art.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cowan et al. (US 5,207,830) and further in view of Feldman (US 5,884,584).

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Cowan discloses animal litter substantially as claimed except pine or recycled construction wood is not positively claimed, and the exact proportions of each component are not positively disclosed. Cowan discloses the known types of material used for making cat litter such as cedar, wood shavings, sawdust, (col.1, lns.39-40) and cereal hulls, such as rice (col.1, ln.47).

Regarding the claimed limitation “pine mill waste” in claim1, it is considered obvious that wood shavings and sawdust would comprise pine wood since it is well known that a large portion of construction and/or furniture wood working utilizes pine as the preferred material. Similarly, with regard to the “recycled construction wood,” Cowan’s “sawdust” and “wood shavings” are considered to comprise recycled construction wood, as this is a very broad limitation.

Regarding the proportions of the materials, it is considered obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify Cowan’s disclosed mixture by combining the materials at 60% cedar mill waste, 10% pine mill waste, 10% construction wood, and 20% cereal hulls since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. Further, it is noted that applicant offers no explanation of the criticality of said proportions.

Finally, regarding claim 4, Cowan’s litter is considered to comprise a 75% porosity by volume, since porosity is the percentage of the total volume of the litter that consists of pore space, which is a function of the space between different sized particles, and this value will vary greatly depending upon the particle sizes positions.

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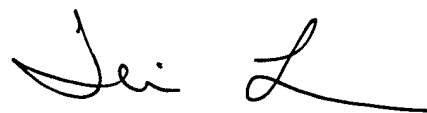
Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susan C. Alimenti whose telephone number is 703-306-0360 (**on or after 4/4/05, 571-272-6897**). The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teri Luu can be reached on 703-305-7421. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

6. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SCA



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PRIMARY EXAMINER